

REMARKS

Claim 11 has been amended so that it is now in independent form and is now allowable.

Claims 5, 12, 14 and 18-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Schilling 6,604,667 B2. The filing (102(e)) date of the '667 patent is May 16, 2002. Attached to this response is a certified copy of Applicants' priority application, which is an accurate translation of the priority application filed in Japan on May 8, 2000, clearly showing that Applicants has support for all claims from the priority application as of May 8, 2000. Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), based on the Schilling '667 patent, should be withdrawn.

Claims 6-8 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schilling '667 in view of Thompson '315. Since the Schilling '667 patent is no longer prior art in view of the attached certified translation, it is submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 16, 17, 26, 38, 39 and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Schilling '667 in view of Heideman '391. Since the Schilling '667 patent is no longer prior art in view of the attached certified translation, it is submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn.

It is submitted that all claims are now of proper form and scope for allowance. Early and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Dated: June 10, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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